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Timothy J. Brosnan

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## John D. Feerick: Attorney at Law

### Cover Page Footnote

Fordham University School of Law, J.D. 1984, Executive Vice President, Business, for Major League Baseball.

## DEDICATION

### JOHN D. FEERICK: ATTORNEY AT LAW

*Timothy J. Brosnan\**

*Q: Santa Claus, the Tooth Fairy, a police officer, and an honest lawyer were having dinner in a restaurant. There was a fifty-dollar bill in the center of the table when the power went off. When the lights came back on, the fifty-dollar bill was gone. Who took it?*

*A: The police officer, because the other three are fictional characters.*

Is there anything worse than a lawyer joke? The fact is if all lawyers were like John Feerick there would simply be no more lawyer jokes.

It really is a shame that John Feerick does not define our profession or is not the prototype for all future lawyers. If he were, the model would include the following specs: Father/Grandfather, Teacher, Scholar, Mentor, Moral Compass, Advisor/Consultant to Diverse Business Interests etc., etc.

John Feerick's lifelong achievements are too numerous to mention (and many of them are probably known only to him, as humility is one of his greatest strengths) in this short tribute. Nevertheless, if you were to ask John what made him most proud he would answer unflinchingly, his family. John possesses enormous reverence for the achievements of his Irish immigrant parents, undying love and devotion for his wife, Emalie, dedication and concern for his six children. And if you really want to see John's eyes dance with glee just engage him in a discussion about being a grandfather.

We know the demands our profession puts on all of us and the constant challenge they present in trying to maintain life's balance. John has always been clear on his "family first" priority. His retirement and the resulting time he will now invest with his grandchildren will only serve as an exclamation point to his commitment.

After his family, his students were the people John committed (and will continue to commit) his life's work to. Twenty years worth of day and evening students at the Law School benefited from John's singular attention to the needs, comforts and, ultimately, education of

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\* Fordham University School of Law, J.D. 1984, Executive Vice President, Business, for Major League Baseball.

each and every one. Many, if not most, of the readers of this tribute will be able to recall an issue of theirs that John dealt with personally as their Dean or Professor.

For me, John's role as mentor is his most admirable. "Mentoring" probably demanded the biggest share of John Feerick's time and attention. How many of us in the Fordham community (and in the many of John's various communities) have been the beneficiary of John's advice and counsel? The proverbial "door is always open" for those who seek John's counsel on a wide range of issues. If you seek John out for advice or assistance you are guaranteed to seek it again and again. That is because in John as mentor you always get consistent results. John does not blow smoke. John listens and if he believes he can help, he helps. If he cannot help, he finds someone who can. When he offers counsel, he believes it—it's the same counsel he would offer his son or daughter. It always comes from the heart.

John did not come by the moniker "John the Good" accidentally. People are in awe of John's moral compass. John's capacity to do good appears limitless. In fact, Spike Lee should write John a royalty check as John has been "Do[ing] the Right Thing" long before Mr. Lee titled his movie. Labor leaders, politicians, charitable benefactors, faculty members, bar associations, just to name a few, have consistently come to accept John's judgement as the path to justice. He leads without motive, other than a desire to lead. He judges without judging. He always helps out without asking for a return of the favor. John does good deeds for people no matter their standing.

I earlier made mention of John's most appealing trait: his humility. Please allow me to expound. You may know that John was chosen in 1987 by then Governor Cuomo to Chair the Commission on Government Integrity. You may know that John served as the President of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. You may know that John helped write the Twenty-Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution. You may also know that John was the lead mediator/arbitrator in many high profile labor disputes, among them the 1994 New York City Transit negotiations, or was the labor czar with regard to the National Football League salary cap or the judge and jury on the NBA/Latrell Sprewell dispute. You probably know of many more of John's famous undertakings, but I will bet you did not come to know any of these things by talking to John.

That John D. Feerick is irreplaceable is an understatement. Our community, while celebrating John's long career, faces a greater challenge in attempting to replace all that he does for all of us. We will miss John Feerick dearly.

Personally I have been the beneficiary of all the good that is John Feerick. At various times John has been my Professor, Dean, Mentor, Moral Compass and Advisor/Consultant. Most importantly, somewhere along the way John became my friend. As such, John has

been among the people most influential in my life. I am so much the better from my relationship with John Feerick.

I currently work in a business, Baseball, that I believe people use to mark time in their lives (e.g., I was entering a new job the month Reggie Jackson hit three home runs in the World Series). Research says that is so because Baseball is an enduring institution, one that people generally feel good about.

I don't know about any of you, but I mark time by my relationship with John Feerick. John can retire from being Dean of Fordham Law School, but in his role as friend he is not going anywhere. I've still got a lot of time to mark.

John Feerick—Congratulations, Best Wishes and Thank You, Thank You, Thank you.

—Tim, Claire, Helen, Kevin and Charlotte Brosnan

## *Notes & Observations*